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Intelligence Report

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ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Prepared by
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Abstract

A series of seemingly unimportant events recently has drawn international attention to the small and normally uninhabited islands of the South China Sea generally designated as the Spratly and the Paracel Islands and the Pratas Reef. The assertion of private claims by business adventurers in the Spratly Islands, including the small reefs and cays named "Dangerous Ground," has brought small armed units to the scene and revived old disputes. In the Paracels, Chinese Communist fishing and guano-digging operations have aroused Vietnamese fears and also have led to renewal of past claims to the island group by Nationalist China, Communist China, and Vietnam. A small Vietnamese garrison remains on Pattle Island, some 45 miles southwest of the scene of Chinese Communist operations on Woody Island.

The international status of these islands has never been settled. The United States has neither advanced claims of its own in the area nor made any official determination of the merits of the respective claims of others. Despite their small size and apparently limited usefulness, their strategic location and the nationalistic sensitivities of the several claimants make it likely that these island groups will continue to attract international attention from time to time, and, as long as they continue to be visited or garrisoned by the contending parties, there remains the possibility of armed clashes.

The following report reviews the history of conflicting claims, summarizes recent developments in the area, and in the two appendices presents general descriptive information about the island groups.

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I. SPRATLY ISLANDS

In the southeastern part of the South China Sea between Vietnam, the Philippines, and Borneo, lie a string of tiny islands known in English as the Spratly Islands.[1] The group extends in a northeasterly-southwesterly direction for a distance of about 300 miles.

Interest in the islands stems from their geographic position and possible economic value. The largest, Itu Aba, is of sufficient size to have been used by the Japanese for limited military operations. There is consequently some fear in Vietnam and the Philippines that the islands might eventually be lost to the Chinese Communists and be used for military purposes. Furthermore, the Spratlys' guano phosphate deposits and fishing grounds are of some economic value and the islands might also be used for meteorological observations and as navigational aids. Rumors concerning the possible existence of petroleum deposits have been circulated recently, but available geological information does not support such prospects.

A. Active Claimants

Claims have been made to all or part of the Spratlys by four governments within the last few months, and at least two others currently appear to be considering asserting their rights in the area. No general attempt to settle the problem has been made by the claimants.

1. Nationalist China. The islands have been visited for many years by Chinese nationals and Chinese fishing vessels. At one time they were "administered" by the Governor of Taiwan. The Chinese protested early Japanese exploitation of the islands and the French announcement of annexation in 1933. Following the defeat of the Japanese in World War II, the Chinese sent token forces to occupy the islands in December 1945, and proclaimed sovereignty over them the following January. The Nationalist Government presently lays claim to the islands including the area known as "Dangerous Ground," and has protested the recent claims of the Filipino citizen, Tomas Cloma.

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1. There is no internationally agreed definition of precisely what is referred to by the term "Spratly Islands." It was used in the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty to apply to an undefined group of islands west of the island of Palawan (Philippines) in the South China Sea, held by Japan during the war. For the purposes of this paper, the term is used to apply to Spratly Island itself, Amboyna Cay, the Tizard Bank (including Itu Aba and Namyit), Loaita, Thitu, and North Danger. Between these islands and Palawan lies an uncharted area of isles and reefs known as the "Dangerous Ground." For a more detailed description, see Appendix A.

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2. Communist China. The Chinese Communist claim to these islands was first set forth by Chou En-lai on August 15, 1951 in his formal comment on the San Francisco Peace Conference, when he asserted that these islands "have always been Chinese territory." On May 29, 1956, a spokesman for the Foreign Office of the Peiping regime reiterated Chou's statement. Other recent Peiping broadcasts have attempted to justify these claims on the basis of Chinese historical records dating back to the 15th century and on the Sino-French Convention of 1887, respecting the delimitation of territory between Tonkin and China, which Peiping views as having acknowledged Chinese rights to these islands.

In late June 1956, Izvestia carried an article which endorsed the Chinese Communist claim, stating that "for several centuries China has been exercising its sovereignty over the four archipelagos in the South China Sea," and that China's claims to the islands were "confirmed by history and appropriate diplomatic documents."

3. France. A French gunboat visited Spratly Island in 1930 and France claimed possession that same year. In April 1933, two French warships raised the French flag over Spratly Island, Amboyna Cay, Itu Aba, Loaita, Thitu, and North Danger and their satellite cays. Shortly thereafter, on July 25, 1933, these were formally annexed by the French Government. French vessels made periodic visits in the following years and in 1938 Annamese gendarmes were sent to Spratly Island with materials for the construction of unspecified installations. When the Japanese announced their annexation of the archipelago in 1939, the French protested vigorously. In an aide memoire of September 5, 1955, the French Government declared categorically that the Spratly Islands were part of the French Union and specifically distinguished them from the Paracels where the French recognize the Vietnamese claim.

4. Vietnam. Ever since the San Francisco Conference in 1951, the Vietnamese Government has steadfastly maintained its right to sovereignty over the islands. This claim is presumably based on historical rights and succession to the French rights there, since a Foreign Ministry spokesman informally described the Vietnamese claim as applying to the islands which the French claimed in 1933.

B. Interested Parties

1. Philippines. For some time members of the Philippine Government have expressed an interest in extending Filipino sovereignty to the islands of the "Dangerous Ground" and Spratly group. On at least two occasions former President Quirino expressed his opinion that the Spratlys ought to belong to the Philippines because of their geographic proximity. More recently in 1955 and again in 1956, the Philippine Foreign Office has considered occupying and laying claim to one or more of the islands, but apparently has hesitated to do so without the backing of the United States.

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Within the last year, individuals operating from the Philippines twice have claimed the islands as their private property and each claim has stimulated Philippine interest in the unoccupied isles. No formal claim to the islands on the part of the Philippines has been advanced to date.

2. The United Kingdom. Spratly Island and Amboyna Cay were visited by a British naval vessel, "Rifleman," in 1864, and the former was named in honor of a whaling captain. According to the UK Foreign Office, a license was issued to a British subject and an American in 1887 "to hoist the British flag" and work the two islands for guano. These rights were regranted in 1889 to the Central Borneo Company. In 1939 the British Ambassador in Tokyo explicitly denied the legal foundation of the Japanese annexation. A Foreign Office memorandum dated October 12, 1955 asserts Her Majesty's Government had never acknowledged the various claims that have been made by other countries.[1] In the view of the Foreign Office, with the exception of Spratly and Amboyna Cay and possibly one other, the islands are "reefs and shoals, some of them being listed as covered at all states of the tide and therefore uninhabitable and incapable of appropriation and occupation." Although the UK has not recognized any other claim to the islands, it is not clear that she has explicitly advanced her own claim.

3. Germany. At the time that Germany was extending its colonial empire into Micronesia, there were indications of German interest in these islands also. A late 19th century report alleged that Germany was preparing to survey the islands but refrained from sending the expedition because of Chinese objections.

4. Japan. In 1917 a party from a Japanese steamer discovered phosphate on a number of the islands of the group. The next year a Japanese company sent out an exploratory expedition and in 1921 began the construction of establishments there. Although they abandoned the guano operation in 1931 because of the depression, the Japanese protested the 1933 French annexation of six of the islands. In 1936 the Japanese phosphate company resumed operations, and in 1939 the Japanese Government announced annexation of what it called the Sinnan Islands, a large area including much of the "Dangerous Ground" as well as the Spratlys. During World War II, the Japanese established a meteorological and communications station on Itu Aba. All claims to the area were renounced by Japan in Article II (f) of the Japanese Peace Treaty.

5. United States. The only official action ever taken by United States on the status of the islands was to protest the Japanese claim in 1939. The Secretary of State addressed a note to the Japanese Ambassador stating that the US did not consider all the islands and reefs within the extensive area

1. T-158, Tokyo, March 31, 1939, CONFIDENTIAL, reports that the British withdrew their claim in favor of the French when the Japanese announced annexation.

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claimed by Japan as properly constituting one group and did not consider that Japan had adequately demonstrated its claim to all of them. The US supported the French suggestion that the issue be submitted to arbitration.

C. Recent Developments

The recent scramble to claim the islands began in June 1955 when an American citizen, Morton F. Meads, without US Government backing, laid claim to the "Manity Islands" west of Palawan where he established his "Kingdom of Humanity." This action drew a note from the Chinese Nationalist Ambassador in Manila to the effect that any boats which may have visited the islands were violating Chinese territorial waters.

On May 21, 1956, Tomas Cloma, a friend and business associate of Philippine Vice President and Foreign Minister Garcia, announced that he had staked claim to most of the Spratlys and to the "Dangerous Ground" area as his private property. Cloma stated he had recently visited the islands, surveyed and mapped them, and left there a number of cadets from his own private Philippine Maritime Institute Nautical School. Vice President Garcia showed an obvious interest by stating he saw no reason why the islands should not belong to the Philippines and ordered the Foreign Office to look into the matter.

Reaction from abroad was immediate. The following day the Chinese Ambassador in Manila delivered a note to the Foreign Office reasserting the Chinese Nationalist claim. The Chinese National Government considered it of prime importance to its prestige that its claims be vigorously upheld. President Chiang himself apparently ordered two destroyer escorts with a platoon of marines on board to the scene. This force, dispatched from Taiwan on June 1, did not make contact with the Filipinos supposedly on the islands, though in the course of temporary landings on several of the islands signs of recent occupancy, including anti-Nationalist slogans written in Tagalog and dated as late as May 27, 1956, were discovered.

In short order other claims to the archipelago were publicly put forward by Communist China in a radio broadcast on May 29, by the Government of Vietnam through a Foreign Office communique on June 1, and by France in a note to the Philippine Government on June 7.

Cloma, who named the islands "Freedomland" and set up a government for them, returned several times after the Chinese expedition had returned to Taiwan. A larger Chinese expedition from Taiwan landed in the islands on July 11 but again found them abandoned, although there were evidences of recent occupancy of Thitu as well as Itu Aba Island. Part of this force was left on Itu Aba Island as a permanent garrison to protect the Chinese claim. Considerable supplies were off-loaded and a radio tower and other permanent constructions were erected. Meanwhile, the press on Taiwan advertised for farmers and fishermen to volunteer as colonists for the islands.

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Cloma and his brother claim to have visited the islands again since the Nationalist Chinese established their garrison on Itu Aba. Although he claims to have passed by Itu Aba and landed on Thitu, no contact was made with the Nationalists. Cloma appears to be doing his best to uphold his claim in the hope the Philippine Government will decide to support him. Most recently he was reported in Japan negotiating for the purchase of a fishing vessel for communications and transportation to the islands.

The Vietnamese informally are encouraging the Philippines to advance a claim for part of the islands, and have indicated they will send a force to occupy one of them. Although Vice President Garcia has recommended to President Magsaysay that the Philippines announce their claim, the president and his leading foreign and military advisors have expressed opposition to Philippine involvement in the dispute.

II. THE PARACEL ISLANDS

The Paracel Islands, comprising the Amphitrite and Crescent Groups and a few additional reefs and islets, lie approximately equidistant from Vietnam and the island of Hainan. All units in the cluster, except the submerged North Reef, lie south of the 17th Parallel, dividing Communist North Vietnam from South Vietnam. (See Appendix A).

These islands lie in the main shipping lanes of the South China Sea and provide a number of safe anchorages for small ships. For these reasons and because of their potential as bases for ship interdiction, emergency landing strips for aircraft, and for surveillance, they have attained importance in international affairs far beyond what their size and general utility would warrant. In the past the Paracels have been used principally as: 1) a base for seasonal fishing operations by the Chinese and Vietnamese; 2) the site of a meteorological station maintained by the Chinese, French, and Vietnamese; and 3) a source of guano for the Japanese during World War II and the Chinese Communists at present.

A. Active Claimants

Sovereignty over the Paracel Islands, in the absence of any international agreement, has been in dispute since the 1920's. The principal claimants today are the Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of China, and the Chinese Communists, although several other powers have an historical and/or current strategic interest in them.

1. Nationalist China. Chinese fishermen, operating from Hainan Island, have used various of the islands for several centuries. China officially claimed the Paracels (in Chinese, Hsi-sha Ch'un-tao) in 1909 on the grounds that they had "always been part of China" and had never been alienated. The islands are referred to in mid-18th century Chinese histories as belonging to China. On July 4, 1938, the Chinese Ambassador to Paris protested

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a French assertion of sovereignty. The National Government of China sent an expedition to Woody Island in December 1946 and China again proclaimed sovereignty over the Paracels on January 17, 1947. A minor brush with a French expedition in May 1947 led to an informal agreement to settle the conflicting claims by negotiation or arbitration, but this has not been done. In May 1950, following the loss of Hainan to the Chinese Communists, the Nationalist post on Woody Island was withdrawn, but the Nationalist claim to the island group was strongly reasserted on June 2, 1956.

2. Communist China. There were unconfirmed reports, in 1950 and 1951, of Chinese Communist intentions to seize the island group and of actual landings on some of the islands. The Chinese Communists publicly claimed sovereignty to the islands, based on historic Chinese claims, at the time of the San Francisco Peace Conference, and Chinese Communist as well as Chinese Nationalist maps continue to show the area as Chinese territory.

3. Vietnam. The Vietnamese officially claimed the Paracels at least as early as 1950, when Emperor Bao Dai declared that he considered them part of Vietnam's national territory. Unofficially the Vietnamese have cited documents describing the Paracels as under the sovereignty of Annam as early as 1701. During the San Francisco Conference in 1951 Vietnam asserted its claim to both the Paracel and Spratly island groups. Vietnamese progressively took over the garrison on Pattle Island from the French, and in the wake of recent Chinese Communist activities on Woody Island, have reasserted claims to sovereignty (most recently on June 1, 1956).

B. Other Interested Parties

1. France. The French surveyed the islands in the 1920's. In 1937 an expedition took soundings and erected a lighthouse on Pattle Island. During a second expedition in 1938, France proclaimed possession of the islands, and announced that they had been completely occupied and placed under the jurisdiction of Indochina. This claim was based on the assertion that China had ceded the islands to Annam in 1816, and that France inherited these rights when it obtained control of Annam (by the Treaty of Peking of June 9, 1885). However, no documentary evidence of the 1816 cession is available. A small French-Vietnamese garrison was withdrawn, under Japanese pressure, prior to the Japanese occupation of Hainan in 1939. A French weather station was opened in 1947 on Pattle Island, and a small garrison of French colonial troops was there until replaced by Vietnamese early in 1956. [Apparently a few French meteorologists still remain.] A September 5, 1955 French aide memoire renewing the French claim to Spratly and neighboring islands, noted that the Paracels have been Vietnamese since the 18th Century, and created the presumption that the earlier French claim was exercised on behalf of Vietnam and now has reverted to the latter.

2. Japan. In 1915 the Japanese discovered the existence of phosphates in the Paracels and the Japanese Government made an unsuccessful effort to determine ownership of the islands. In 1921 a Japanese firm attempted to

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exploit the guano deposits on the islands, but made no permanent settlement. Japan protested the (1938) French claim to sovereignty and herself claimed the islands by right of "discovery" and development. After the occupation of Hainan, the Japanese occupied the Paracels and exploited the guano deposits during World War II. Japanese claims were extinguished by Article II (f) of the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

3. The United Kingdom. The United Kingdom has made no claim to the area, although the British surveyed the islands in 1925 (an earlier survey had been made by the Germans in 1884). As late as 1936 the British apparently considered the islands part of China, for the UK sought rights to establish commercial aviation bases from China.

4. The United States. The US has made no claim to the islands nor any determination as to sovereignty (beyond the San Francisco Treaty's affirmation that they are not Japanese). A 1939 note from Secretary of State Hull to the Japanese protesting the latter's claims to the Spratlys apparently did not encompass the area of the Paracels.

5. Philippines and Communist Vietnam. On the basis of geographic proximity, the "Democratic Republic of Vietnam" and conceivably the Philippines also could be considered as "interested" parties, but neither has advanced any claim to the Paracels. The Vietnamese Communists apparently are deferring to Communist China's claims.

C. Recent Developments

Reports that Chinese Communists were in the Paracels in 1950 and 1951 were never confirmed, but since August 1955 their presence on Woody Island has been observed on innumerable occasions.

The Chinese Communists have constructed several permanent type buildings and recreational facilities and have brought in women and children; aerial reconnaissance on May 23, 1956 revealed about 250 persons on the island. These developments suggest that permanent settlement is intended. Small boats unloading supplies and taking on cargo have been observed and some fishing activity in the area has been noted. There is no evidence of any military activity on the island; the primary occupation of the Communist settlers appears to be guano collection.

This partial occupation by Chinese Communist elements stimulated the Vietnamese to consider ways of asserting their claim and protecting their installation on Pattle Island. On May 29, the Chinese Communists restated their claim to the Paracels and Spratlys; on June 1 the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry issued its renewed claim which, the announcement asserted, had been "recognized" by the San Francisco Treaty; on June 2 the Chinese Nationalist Foreign Ministry denied the validity of the Vietnamese claim and reasserted its own.

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On June 10, the Vietnamese reported a landing by Chinese Communist troops on Robert Island, approximately three miles from Pattle Island. US aerial reconnaissance on June 9 confirmed the presence of some 75 persons on Robert Island, apparently engaged in Guano collection, but subsequent investigation, including a patrol by a landing party from US destroyers despatched to the scene, found that the island had been abandoned by the Chinese Communists. At the beginning of July, the Vietnamese reinforced their garrison on Pattle Island and apparently intend to occupy Robert Island as well. There are no present indications that the Vietnamese will attempt to oust the Chinese Communists from Woody Island.

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III. PRATAS REEF AND ISLAND

Although not currently an international issue Pratas Reef occupies a position similar in other respects to that of the Spratlys and the Paracels. Located about 160 miles southeast of Hong Kong, 280 miles northwest of Luzon, and 280 miles east-northeast of Hainan, the reef consists of a circular coral barrier, roughly 13 miles in diameter, enclosing a coral-studded lagoon with Pratas Island on the western side. Many points within the lagoon and on the northern, eastern, and southern sides of the reef are uncovered at low tide. Pratas, largest of the South China Sea islands considered in this paper, had no permanent inhabitants before World War II but was frequented by Chinese, Japanese, and Formosan fishermen, who gathered seaweed, shells, and corals. It has guano deposits of some value and also can be used for meteorological observations.

From earliest times Chinese fishermen from Kwangtung and Fukien have visited the island. Chinese sovereignty apparently was recognized by Japan in about 1909, and the island was officially placed by the Chinese under the administration of the Governor of Kwangtung. In 1911 the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs surveyed it and in 1926 the Chinese Admiralty constructed and assumed administration of a radio station, lighthouse, and weather observatory on the island. At the time of the Japanese occupation in September 1937, a Chinese staff of some 30 men was removed to Taiwan.

After World War II the Chinese Nationalists established a meteorological station on Pratas Island, and have since maintained it under the auspices of the Nationalist navy. Although the Chinese Communists claim the Pratas Reef as Communist territory, they have made no effort to displace the Nationalists.

In 1906 Japanese discovered buried phosphate on Pratas Island. The following year plans to exploit the deposits were formulated and put into effect. The Japanese felt that, since the island was uninhabited, there was no obstacle to mining, and they sold about 10,000 tons of phosphates to Japanese fertilizer companies. After these activities began, however, Chinese warships repeatedly inspected the island and the issue of ownership arose. The Japanese discontinued operations when, in view of the proximity of the island to South China, they decided that acknowledgement of China's sovereignty would promote Sino-Japanese friendship. As a result of negotiations, the Chinese Government on October 11, 1909 paid 160,000 Canton silver dollars to defray the cost of installations constructed by the Japanese, and the island reverted to Chinese administration.

In September 1937, after the outbreak of war between Japan and China, the Japanese Navy occupied the island and plans for the cultivation of coconut trees and the exploitation of phosphate deposits were announced. Whether or not the Japanese implemented these plans during World War II is not known.

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Appendix A

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

1. Spratly Islands

In the southeastern portion of the South China Sea, spread out between Vietnam, and the Philippines, and Borneo, lie numerous islands, cays, reefs, shoals, and banks which have no common nomenclature in English but which are known collectively by the Chinese as Nan-sha Ch'ün-tao (South San Archipelago). In this paper, the islands and cays in this area are collectively referred to as the Spratlys or the Spratly Islands, and the collective term includes Spratly Island proper, Amboyna Cay, and islands in the Tizard Bank, Loaita Bank, Thitu Reef, North Danger, and in the vast area of reefs and jutting rocks known as "Dangerous Ground".

Spratly Island is a small islet, approximately 500 yards by 300 with an elevation of about 8 feet, situated some 260 miles southeast of Vietnam, 630 miles south of Hainan, and about 330 miles west of Palawan and 325 miles west-northwest of British North Borneo. It has no indigenous population but has been frequented by fishermen from several countries during many decades past. There are some guano deposits on the islands and perhaps phosphate rock. Several palms stand out conspicuously.

About 60 miles southeast of Spratly Island, lies Amboyna Cay, a minute sandy cay with an elevation of about eight feet. This cay apparently possesses little significance, perhaps on account of the steep coral ledges upon which the sea breaks heavily in a swell.

Some 200 miles northeast of Spratly Island, directly outside the northwest portion of the region designated as "Dangerous Ground," lies the Tizard Bank and Reefs, on which are located two islands and a sand cay. Itu Aba, the larger of the two islands, is about three-quarters of a mile long and one-quarter wide. It is covered with small trees and bushes, including a scattering of coconut and plantain trees. A well provides fresh water. Several wrecks dot the shallow water surrounding Itu Aba. A sand cay covered with 15 foot high bushes is situated near the center of a three-quarter mile reef six miles east of Itu Aba Island.

About 12 miles south of Itu Aba Island is Namyit, the second island in the Tizard Bank. About 20 feet high, Namyit is probably not over one-quarter mile in length, and is covered with bushes and small trees.

Some 18 miles north of Itu Aba is Loaita Island in Loaita Bank and Reefs. Loaita (also called South Island) is a small, oval cay, 300 yards in diameter, covered with bushes and fringed by a reef. About seven miles

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northeast of Loaita Island is a reef about three-fourths of a mile in diameter within which lies small, sandy Lankiam Cay. Another cay is located on a reef five miles northeast of Loaita.

About 24 miles north-northwest of Loaita Island, located at the eastern extremity of the Thitu Reefs, is Thitu Island, an oval patch of low lying sand, less than one-half mile at its maximum dimension, with a scattering of coconut and plantain trees. A well is located in the island and at one time there were also a few bamboo huts there. About four miles west of Thitu Island is a sandy cay about one and one-half miles long lying on a reef which dries at low water.

About 20 miles north of Thitu Island is a coral reef known as North Danger, upon which rest Northeast Cay and Southwest Cay, (called by the French "Groupe de Deux-Isles") each less than one-half mile long and 10 and 15 feet high respectively.

Whereas the above-mentioned islands all have been frequented by fishermen and adventurers and are fairly well known, there are others in the largely uncharted area known as "Dangerous Ground" about which very little is known. Perhaps the most prominent of these is Sin Cowe Island, which may be larger than any of the other islands listed above in the Spratly Group, but about which very little information is available.

2. Paracel Islands and Reefs

The northernmost cluster, the Amphitrite Group, consists of Tree, North, Middle, South, Rocky, and Woody islands, and three sand cays. Of these only Woody Island, the southernmost and largest of the group, appears to have any significance. It is a clamshaped island approximately one mile in length and three-fourths of a mile wide. The island is studded with palms and brush, has a pier, and some permanent construction, including about 11 buildings as of March 1956. At present it is occupied by Chinese Communists who appear to be mainly interested in the island for guano exploitation. Rocky Island, half a mile northeast of Woody and within the same reef is approximately one-quarter by one-half mile in size and conspicuous chiefly because of its elevation of 40 to 50 feet. Tree Island is of like size and receives its name from a palm tree located near its center.

The Crescent Group is situated 35 to 45 miles southwest of Woody Island, and consists of six low islands, most of which are covered with thick vegetation. The islands are Money, Robert, Pattle, Drummond, and Duncan (Duncan actually consists of two islands within one reef), each of which has a maximum dimension of about one-half mile, and a height of about 20 to 30 feet. There are, in addition, several sand cays, one on Antelope Reef and several between Observation Bank and Drummond Island. Pattle

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Island has several buildings, constructed by the French and Japanese during their respective periods of occupation, and Robert Island had five huts on the southeast end as of early June 1956. Fresh water wells are to be found on all islands of the group, except possibly Money Island, and small piers have been constructed on several.

Lincoln Island, second largest of the Paracels, is one and one-half miles long and about one-half mile wide and 15 feet high, and stands alone about 23 miles southeast of Woody Island. It has some vegetation and a fresh water well.

South of the Crescent Group are two sandy cays, Passu Keah and Triton Island, 58 and 94 miles southwest of Woody Island, respectively. Triton Island is about the size of Woody Island and 10 feet high, while Passu Keah is a narrow cay, less than three-quarters of a mile in length. Neither has played an important role in affairs relating to the Paracels.

None of the above islands has an indigenous population, but all have been used by fishermen from various countries for many years. Their resources include guano and phosphate deposits, fish, coral, shells, and medicinal seaweed.

3. Pratas Island

Pratas Island (20°42' N., 116°43' E.) is a low, horseshoe-shaped island about one and one-half miles long and one and one-half miles wide. Vegetation includes a few coconut trees and some bushes. The island has a radio station, a 120-foot light tower, and a radar reflector.

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Appendix B

MINOR ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

Group	Island	Chinese Name and Alternative Name	Size: Dimension (yards)	Size: Elevation (feet)	Distance (Statute Miles) From: Viet-minh	Hainan	Hong Kong	Philippines
Spratly Islands		Nan-sha Ch'un-tao Alt: Sinnan (Japanese)						(Palawan)
	Spratly Island	Nan-wei Tao Alt: Storm Island (French)	500 x 300	8	260	630 Borneo:	890 325	330
	Amboyna Cay	An-bo-an Sha		8				
Tizard Bank		Cheng-ho Ch'un-chiao						(Palawan)
	Itu Aba Island	(T'ai-p'ing Tao; and (Ch'ang Tao	1300 x 450	8	330	580	770	210
	Namyit Island	Hung-hsiu Tao	450 x 150	20				
	Sand Cay							
Loaita Bank		Tao-ming Ch'un-tao						
	Loaita Island	Tao-ming (?) Alt: South Island of Horsburgh	300 x 300					

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Appendix B

MINOR ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA (Continued)

Group	Island	Chinese Name and Alternative Name	Size: Dimension (yards)	Size: Elevation (feet)	Distance (Statute Miles) From: Viet-minh	Hainan	Hong Kong	Philippines
Spratly Islands Group, Contd.								
	Lankiam Cay	Yang-hsin-an Sha						
	Thitu Reef	Chung-yeh Ch'un-tao						
	Thitu Island		700 x 500	11	310	540	740	(Palawan) 250
	North Danger	Shuang-tzu Chiao Alt: Groupe de Deux-Isles (French)						
	Northeast Cay		750 x 200	10				
	Southwest Cay		500 x 250	15				
	Dangerous Ground	Wei-hsien Ti-tai						
	Sir Cowe Island	Ching-hsiung Tao						
Paracel Islands		Hsi-sha Ch'un-tao						
	Amphitrite Group	Hsuan-te Ch'un-tao						
	West Sand	Hsi-sha Chou						
	Tree Island		ca 400 x 300					

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Appendix B

MINOR ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEAS (Continued)

Group	Island	Chinese Name and Alternative Name	Size: Dimension (yards)	Size: Elevation (feet)	Distance (Statute Miles) From: Viet-minh	Hainan	Kong	Philippines
Paracel Islands Group, Contd.								
	North Island		ca 1000 x 150					
	Middle Island		ca 400 x 150					
	South Island		ca 700 x 200					
	South Sand	Nan-sha Chou	ca 400 x 250					
	Rocky Island	Shih Tao	500 x 300	40-50				
	Woody Island	(Yung-hsin Tao; and (Lin Tao Alt: Boisée (French)	2000 x 1200		230	190	360	(Luzon) 460
Crescent Group		Yung-le Ch'un-tao						
	Drummond Island		ca 900 x 400					
	Duncan Island (Twin)		ca 900 x 400					

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Appendix B

MINOR ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA (Continued)

Group	Island	Chinese Name and Alternative Name	Size: Dimension (yards)	Size: Elevation (feet)	Distance (Statute Miles) From: Viet-minh	Hainan	Hong Kong	Philippines
Paracel Islands Group, Contd.								
	Money Island	Chin-yin Tao	ca 800 x 350					
	Robert Island	Kan-ch'uan Tao	880 x 300					
	Pattle Island	Shan-hu Tao	880 x 400	30	170	160	400	(Luzon) 540
Individual Islands								
	Lincoln Island	Ho-wu Tao	2800 x 900	15				
	Pyramid Rock	Kao-chien Shih		17				
	Passeu Keah	P'an-shih Hsu	1200 x 200					
	Triton Island	(Chung-chien Tao; and (T'u-lai-t'ang Tao	1700 x 1200	10				
Pratas Reef								
	Pratas Island		2600 x 2600		660	380	200	(Luzon) 290

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